

Parent/Guardian Information Letter for *SurveyWorks!*

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) is working with your local school district to offer the state's new student survey, *SurveyWorks!*, administered by WestEd.¹ This modified version of the traditional SALT (School Accountability for Learning and Teaching) survey will help local schools, school districts, and RIDE improve our schools and support better teaching and learning for all students in Rhode Island. The information collected from this survey will help educators working in Rhode Island improve curriculum and programs so that schools better serve the needs of your child. Schools and districts can use the data collected to secure funding for services based on student interests. Parents can use this information to better understand what students like and don't like about their schools.

All Rhode Island students in grades 4 through 12 are being asked to participate in this survey. The computer survey will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. There are no physical tests or exams involved. Your child's participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous; no names will be used or reported.

The survey will ask questions about:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • College and career readiness | • Nutrition and physical activity | • Tobacco, alcohol, and drug use |
| • School climate | • Learning activities | • Technology use |
| • Teacher expectations | • The condition of school buildings | • Truancy * |
| • School support | • Access to resources | • Mental health* |
| • Family and community involvement | • School safety | • Sexual activity** |
| | • Bullying | • Lifestyle choices** |

* Middle school and high school survey topic

** High school survey topic only

Some students may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions. If your child would like to speak with an adult about specific questions or to discuss issues; a counselor or other qualified professional will be available.

Valid results depend on a high participation rate. However, your child's participation is entirely voluntary. Your child has the right to skip any question, or even stop taking the survey after beginning it. If you have questions regarding this survey, please contact Sue Henderson by phone at (781) 481-1118 or via email at shender@wested.org. If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact WestEd at (877) 493-7833, ext. 3202 or subjects@wested.org. Also, you may review the survey questions in the main office at your student's school.

If you do not want your child to participate, please complete the form attached and return it to your child's school no later than May 24, 2010. You may return the form to the school office in person yourself, by mail, or by your student returning it for you. Please communicate to your child that they will or will not be completing the survey. Thank you for your cooperation with this important effort.

¹ To learn more about WestEd, please visit www.wested.org.

2010 Rhode Island Department of Education School Survey
OPT-OUT FORM

Complete this form **only** if you **do not** wish your child to participate in the survey. Return it to your child's school no later than May 24, 2010.

I **do not give permission** for my child to participate in the confidential 2010 Rhode Island Department of Education *SurveyWorks!* Survey. I understand that my child will be assigned to a different activity during the administration of the survey.

Student's Name (please print): _____

Student's School (please print): _____ Grade: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

*Please return this page to your student's school office ONLY if you **do not** wish your student to participate.*